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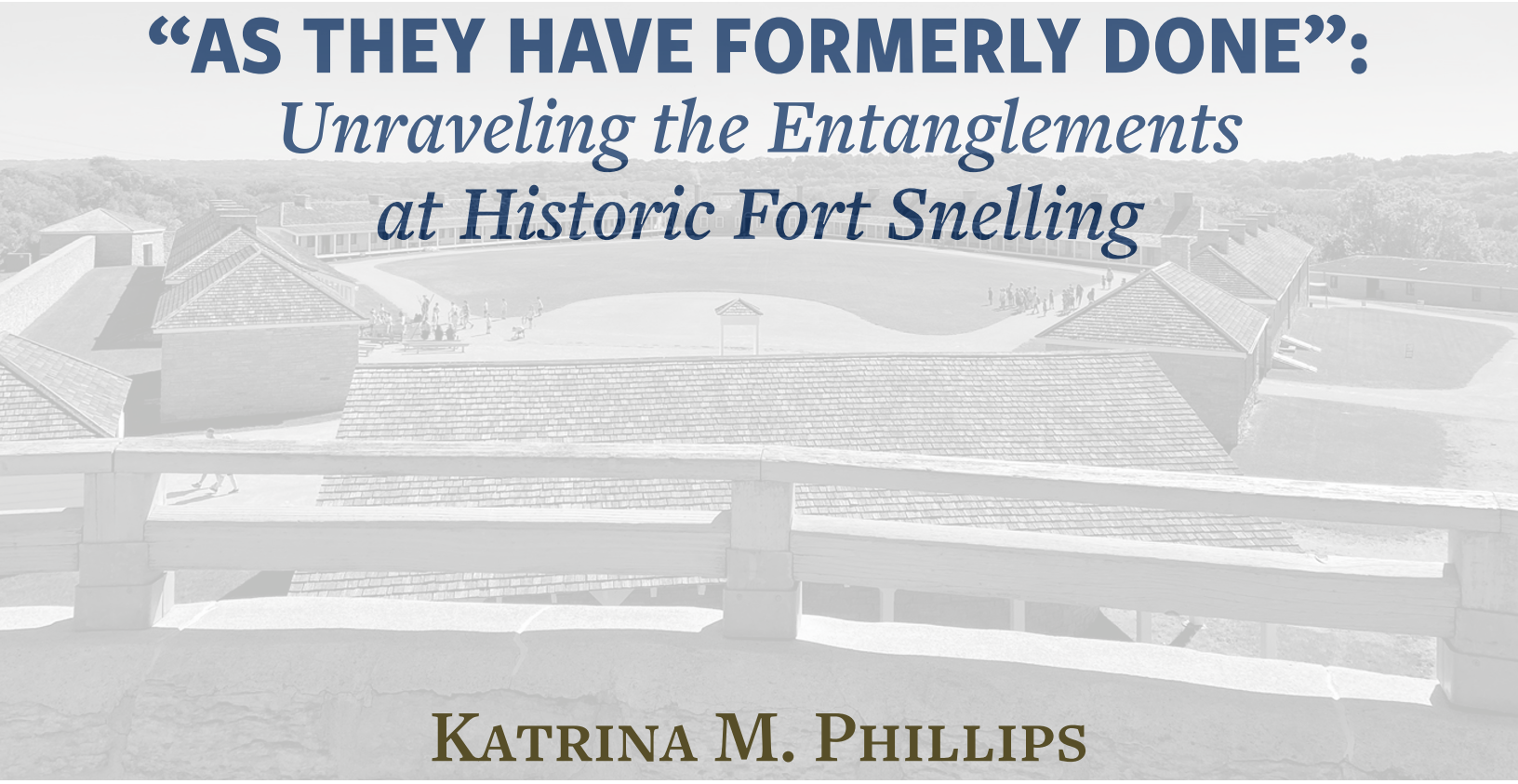
"AS THEY HAVE FORMERLY DONE": *Unraveling the Entanglements at Historic Fort Snelling*



Katrina M. Phillips

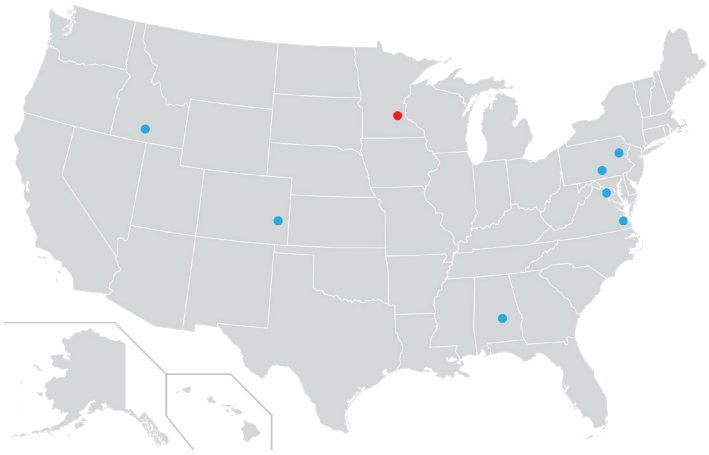
ABSTRACT

The United States built Fort Snelling at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers in the 1820s. Initially conceived as a means to protect American interests in the region, the fort was used in military operations across multiple wars until it was decommissioned in 1946. This essay examines the fort's role in American expansion, particularly through the lens of the US–Dakota War of 1862. In the wake of the war, Dakota survivors were forced to spend the winter in a concentration camp erected outside the fort. A century later, efforts to restore and reconstruct the fort led to the opening of Historic Fort Snelling in 1970. The fort's lengthy history—and its role in so many historical eras and events—has led to continued contestations over interpretation at the site, and even the name itself.

As my nine-year-old son, Leo, and I pulled into the parking lot at Historic Fort Snelling in the summer of 2022, I noticed that the words "at Bdote"—added by the Minnesota Historical Society (MNHS) in 2017—had been covered up on the sign at the entrance. Fort Snelling has sat at the confluence of Minnesota and the Mississippi Rivers, a place that Dakota people call Bdote, for more than 200 years. Bdote is the Dakota place of origin, the center of who they are as Dakota people.[1] The construction of an American military fort at one of the most sacred Dakota sites underscores the enduring legacies of these intertwined histories, most notably through the ways the general public engages with the interpretation at the site.

In 2019, in response to the addition of "at Bdote," Republican senators in the Minnesota legislature passed a bill to slash MNHS funding by $4 million a year. If enacted, the bill would have put up to 80 MNHS employees out of work, drastically reduce hours at historic sites, and diminish its educational programming. Criticizing the change as "revisionist history," State Senator Mary Kiffmeyer argued that "Fort Snelling is about military history, and we should be very careful to make sure that we keep that. It's the only real military history in a very unifying way

amongst all Minnesotans. It is our premiere [sic] entity for military history."[2] However, the state's Democratic governor and Democratic-led House supported fully funding MNHS, and the final budget bill for state agencies upheld MNHS's funding.



But Leo didn't know that, and he jumped out of the car and headed toward the new visitor center. Historic Fort Snelling, located in present-day St. Paul, reopened in the spring of 2022 after a two-year renovation project that included $34.5 million worth of improvements. The new Plank Museum and Visitor Center was a US Army Cavalry barracks from 1904 that was later converted to an outpatient Veterans' Affairs clinic, but had sat vacant since 1989. The state—which owns the site—covered $19.5 million of the cost, while MNHS—which operates the site—raised the remaining $15 million through private funding.[3]

We were greeted by a volunteer named Mark as we walked in the door. A retired lawyer, it was his first season at the fort. He pointed us toward the ticket counter and encouraged us to come back to his station so he could show us the Dakota–English map. We got our tickets and headed back to Mark's station. The dual-language map on the wall was a bird's-eye view of the area, showing the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers, Pike Island, and the mainland. The Dakota words rolled off Mark's tongue as he explained to Leo why the site was both strategic and valuable: the high bluffs made it a vantage point for seeing the impending arrival of potential friends, enemies, or trading partners, while its position at the confluence made it an easily accessible trading site.

Construction on Fort Snelling began in 1819, and the fort was completed by 1825. The fort is named for Colonel Josiah Snelling, the military officer who oversaw the fort's design and construction and served as its first commander. If, in 1820, you had drawn a line from Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, in the far southwestern part of the state, to the Pacific Ocean, Fort Snelling would have been the only US military post in the Northwest.[4] It was the "cradle of settlement in the Northwest," the "limestone citadel on the bluff," the "colossus of the wilderness," with Major Stephen H. Long noting in 1818 how the proposed location capitalized on the "healthfulness, Security, and a Complete command of the river."[5] It was, as Stephen Osman reminds us, designed to promote and protect the fur trade, and to enforce peace by controlling Ojibwe and Dakota people.[6]

For this essay, I've been asked to revisit Fort Snelling—Minnesota's first national historic landmark—through the lens of the US–Dakota War, an 1862 conflict that led to the largest mass execution in the history of the United States and the forced internment of the war's Dakota survivors outside the fort's walls in the winter of 1862–1863.[7]

Fort Snelling is not a literal battlefield like Gettysburg. It's not the site of a brutal and bloody massacre like Sand Creek, nor is it the site of a contestation like the march to Montgomery. For more than two centuries, the fort has played a crucial role in regional settlement as well as the nation's war efforts. But these developments have come at the expense of Ojibwe, Dakota, and Ho-Chunk peoples. In this essay, I argue that the fort's grip on Minnesotans' memories, particularly through the continued focus on its role in American military history, clouds and obfuscates Native histories in favor of the celebratory, familiar narrative of frontier conflicts and world wars.

Fort Snelling is one of more than two dozen MNHS sites across the state. It's one of five related to the US–Dakota War, including Birch Coulee Battlefield, the site of one of the war's deadliest battles. Other related sites are the

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A view of the fort's interior taken from the top of the famed round tower. KATRINA M. PHILLIPS, AUGUST 2022

Lower Sioux Agency, which was established in Morton as a government agency in 1853 and the first site attacked by Dakota warriors in August of 1862. Fort Ridgely in Fairfax came under attack a few days later. The final related site is Traverse des Sioux, home to one of the 1851 treaty signings that led to the war.

Given Fort Snelling's long history, Hampton Smith argues that it's best to consider this history in several phases. The first, from 1819 to 1858, centers the role of the fort and its Indian agency in the region's colonization and settlement during the period—including the experiences of enslaved persons like Dred Scott, who were forcibly brought to the fort by agents and military officials. The fort was sold in 1858, only to be called back into action from 1861–1865 during the Civil War. After it served as a concentration camp for Dakota people in the wake of the US–Dakota War of 1862, it was the regimental headquarters for several units of buffalo soldiers as the Indian Wars raged on the Great Plains.[8] It was maintained as a regular US military post from 1866 through 1919, before becoming known as the "country club of the Army" from 1920 until 1941. It served as an officer training school in World War I and housed the US Military Intelligence Service Language School—a secret program that trained Japanese-Americans to interrogate captured soldiers and translate documents in the Pacific Theater—during World War II.[9] The fort was permanently decommissioned in 1946, and that was the last time Fort Snelling was used as an active military base.[10]

Unfortunately, there are too many competing narratives and too many eras within the fort's lengthy history to give justice to the Dakota story of war. For many Dakota descendants of those who were marched to the fort in the wake of the war, the descendants of those who were sent downriver to Davenport, Iowa, or shipped to the barren Crow Creek Reservation, the fort is a site of genocide, a living testament to the deliberately destructive nature of American settler colonialism. Native history is deeply embedded in the history of Minnesota, and it is deeply embedded in the history of the fort itself. Fort Snelling, the historic site, struggles with what Jodi Byrd calls the "colonial cacophony." As Byrd contends, we must understand "that system of competing and antagonistic parallax views, which layer and resonate across temporal and geographical localities within empire, as a cacophony of contesting experiences…."[11]

BUILDING A FORT AT BDOTE

The young United States had a fairly tenuous hold on the Upper Mississippi region after the American Revolution. In 1805, two years after the Louisiana Purchase, General James Wilkinson, as the first governor of Louisiana Territory,

sent a young officer named Zebulon Pike on a mission to find the source of the Mississippi River, figure out the status of British trading, find potential locations for military posts, and negotiate with Native nations to finalize those post locations.[12] In the 1805 Treaty of St. Peters, also known as Pike's Purchase, the US purchased about 100,000 acres of land at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers for the purposes of building a military fort.[13] But Pike didn't exactly have the authority to make such a treaty, and the Senate wouldn't look at the treaty until 1808. Pike's purchase would not turn the government's eye toward the Upper Mississippi region until the end of the War of 1812. As both Osman and Peter DeCarlo contend, the US wanted to keep the British out of the region, profit off the many natural resources, remain a major player in the fur trade, and try to keep the peace between the Ojibwe and the Dakota.[14] Fort Snelling—and the support it lent to ongoing white settlement—was crucial to the creation of the Minnesota Territory and the territory's eventual statehood. But the fort was still a center of Native trade and activity. An 1835 painting by George Catlin captured Ojibwe men dancing near the agency, and the men at the fort often had to tread carefully in order to survive on what was still Native land.[15]

In 1836, an enslaved man named Dred Scott was brought to the fort by Dr. John Emerson, who served as the fort's surgeon until 1840. Never mind that the fort lay on land where slavery had been prohibited by the Missouri Compromise. Dred Scott married an enslaved woman named Harriet, whom the doctor had purchased from Lawrence Taliaferro, the Indian agent at the fort. Several years later, the Scotts argued that they had been forced to live as enslaved people on free soil, and their enslavement at Fort Snelling set the stage for the now-infamous decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*.[16]

While the 1805 treaty had included the cession of some land, the first large-scale land cessions occurred in 1837 with treaties signed by Ojibwe and Dakota leaders at Fort Snelling.[17] By the late 1840s, Minnesota leaders like Alexander Ramsey, the territorial governor, and fur trader-turned-territorial-delegate Henry Sibley started to push for a new treaty. In the summer of 1851, Ramsey, Sibley, and federal commissioner Luke Lea called for a treaty council. Between pressure from traders and with the threat of military force on the horizon, leaders from the Sisseton and Wahpeton bands of the Dakota reluctantly signed the treaty of Traverse des Sioux on July 23, 1851. The treaty ceded a vast majority of the southern and western part of Minnesota to the United States, promised a ten-mile-wide reservation on both sides of the Minnesota River, and promised payment for the lands they ceded. A few weeks later, leaders from the two lower bands of the Dakota, the Mdewakanton and Wahpekute, signed the Treaty of Mendota, which moved the bands to the Lower Sioux Agency on the Minnesota River near what's now Morton.[18]

These treaties helped pave the way for Minnesota statehood in 1858 and, like the construction of military forts like Fort Snelling, disrupted the relationships between Native Nations and their homelands. Treaties made Native people dependent on the federal government by pushing them onto reservations and barring them from hunting. Despite promises of food goods and annuity payments, Native people often went hungry. Commissioner Lea firmly believed that the Dakota should be "placed in positions where they can be controlled and finally compelled by stern necessity to resort to agricultural labor or starve."[19] Within a decade, the Dakota were desperate.

"THEY HELP THEMSELVES": THE US–DAKOTA WAR OF 1862

Thirty-eight Dakota men were simultaneously hanged on the day after Christmas in 1862 in Mankato, Minnesota, an hour and a half south of the Twin Cities. For the majority of white Minnesotans, the US–Dakota War began one hot summer day in August 1862 and ended that winter morning. For the Dakota, the war had begun long before, and it was far from over after the executions. The repercussions of the conflict still reverberate across the state today, and Historic Fort Snelling remains a focal point of that history.

Annuity payments were often late—or didn't arrive at all. Traders refused to extend credit. A trader named Andrew Myrick told the Dakota that, if they were hungry, they could "eat grass." The US–Dakota began when some younger Dakota men scuffled with some settlers near Acton in August of 1862, leaving five settlers dead. Some Dakota called to continue the attacks, while others called for peace. Taoyateduta, or Little Crow, agreed to lead the warriors. "We have waited a long time," Taoyateduta told Indian agent Thomas J. Galbraith. "The money is ours, but we cannot get it. We have no food, but here are these stores, filled with food.… When men are hungry they help themselves."[20]

Ramsey called a special session of the Minnesota Legislature in September in response to the war. He declared that the Dakota must be treated as outlaws, demanding that they "be exterminated or driven forever beyond the borders of the state."[21] The fighting raged throughout southern Minnesota, through New Ulm, Birch Coolie, Hutchinson, Wood Lake, and Forest City. Fort Abercrombie was the site of several skirmishes. After the Battle of Wood Lake, some Dakota went west to Dakota Territory or north to Canada. Many agreed to meet Sibley at what came to be called Camp Release, where Sibley took the Dakota into custody. A five-man military tribunal, instituted in September to determine guilt and sentencing, sped through up to 40 cases a day and often made decisions in less than five minutes. Out of the 392 men tried, 303 were sentenced to death. Sixteen were given prison terms and the rest were acquitted.[22] President Lincoln soon determined that only the men proven to have committed atrocities—as determined by Congress—would hang, much to the dismay of many Minnesotans. Thus followed the hangings of December 26, 1862.

In the wake of the mass execution, the men whose sentences had been commuted were sent to Davenport, Iowa, and imprisoned there for three years. More than 100 Dakota men died before they could be released. About 1,600 surviving prisoners—mostly women, children, and elders—were forced to march 150 miles from Lower Sioux to Fort Snelling. They were often attacked by angry Minnesotans as they walked through towns in the southern part of the state. Those who grew weak or sick were often shot or stabbed by the soldiers and left to die along the way. One of the most horrific stories recounts how a Dakota baby was snatched from its mother's arms and bashed against a tree. The baby died a few hours later.[23]

The surviving Dakota were imprisoned within a wooden stockade erected outside Fort Snelling. It was not, as Corinne Monjeau-Marz reminds us, a "standard military prison or one of the prisoner-of-war camps housing the increasing number of Confederates." Instead, it was a temporary military camp that interned innocent noncombatants. The winter of 1862–1863 was brutal—even by Minnesota standards—and hundreds of Dakota died from the weather or from a measles epidemic that ran rampant through the camp.[24] In the spring of 1863, the Minnesota Legislature voided all treaties with the Dakota people and passed a law banning Dakota people from residing in the state. Those who had survived the harsh winter were forcibly removed to the Crow Creek reservation in South Dakota. Over the next two years, punitive expeditions set out from the fort looking for any remaining Dakota. Taoyateduta was shot and killed in July of 1863. Two years later, two Dakota leaders, known as Little Six and Medicine Bottle, were kidnapped in Canada and brought to Fort Snelling. They were tried by a military tribunal and sentenced to death. In November of 1865, they were hanged outside Fort Snelling.[25]

REVISITING THE PAST

Concerns about protecting and preserving the fort date back to at least 1864—two years after the US–Dakota War, a year after the Dakota were interned in the stockade, and the year before Little Six and Medicine Bottle were executed at the fort.[26] It was designated a national historic landmark in 1960, and the Minnesota Legislature established Fort Snelling State Park in 1961. Legislators approved a ten-year program to rebuild the fort in 1965, and reconstruction and restoration began in 1966. It reopened as Historic Fort Snelling in 1970.[27] As Amy Tyson demonstrates, the reconstruction and restoration of the fort was part of the nationwide post-war push to recreate the past: in 1965, Minnesota state representative William J. O'Brien dreamed that the fort would become "Minnesota's Williamsburg."[28] The fort's multifaceted history, though, has led to ongoing contestations over its interpretation, means of interpretation, and even its name.

As Leo and I make our way through the new visitor center, we see a US Army saddle laden down with everything a soldier might have needed, complete with a canteen, a tin cup, and leather saddlebags. Behind that stands a glass case with a uniformed mannequin. We head upstairs, past a group of benches that face a large video screen. The second floor of the visitor center houses a banner exhibit called *We Served Here: The Military and Fort Snelling*. The exhibit, comprising perhaps ten to twelve double-sided banners, follows the fort's military history from its construction to the present day. Only one banner covers the US–Dakota War, and the text is worth quoting in full:

> *On August 17, 1862, the first conflict of what would become the US–Dakota War broke out.*

Historic Fort Snelling's famous round tower. KATRINA M. PHILLIPS, AUGUST 2022

> *Parts of four volunteer regiments were forming at Fort Snelling, to serve the Union in the Civil War. Col. Henry Sibley redirected four companies to the combat zone in Minnesota. Other companies soon followed.*
>
> *Many soldiers who joined to save the Union occupied distant forts and participated in the forced removal of Dakota people instead. Others later battled rebels on Southern fronts, fighting in two civil wars instead of one.*[29]

Other banners highlight the Army's 1941 creation of the Military Intelligence Service Language School and its 1944 move to Fort Snelling amidst the ongoing internment of Japanese-Americans. We make a quick stop at a video station, learning that Minnesota was the first state to pledge volunteers to the Civil War.[30]

By this point, Leo's reached his limit of banners and videos. His mom promised him a fort, and the kid wants to see a fort. Bikers whiz past us on the Minnehaha Trail as we walk to the fort. The path is lined with a few mounted placards titled, among other things, "US–Dakota War of 1862," "Imprisonment of Dakota Families," and "Executions at Fort Snelling." While the placards provide information about the context of the war and its aftermath, they're not particularly prominent—especially for visitors who, like me, have impatient children who are done with signs and placards. We're met at the entrance by more volunteers, including one who refers to them all as "blue-shirted history nerds." Leo and I head toward the round tower. We climb the circular staircase, and Leo runs around counting the open gaps in the tower. "Mom," he says excitedly, "You could have soldiers looking out every one of these. You can see everything, and I bet that's why they did it!" It never occurs to him that it was partially designed to keep his Ojibwe ancestors out of the fort.

It's time for the military demonstration. Each week's demonstration centers a different historical era, and this week was the 1940s. The short program includes a weapons inspection, an explanation of how soldiers threw grenades, and a bolt-action rifle demonstration. Then we wander past the shed filled with a variety of historical cannons on our way to the meeting point for the general tour. Our tour guide gives an overview of Dakota history in the region, including the arrival of French fur traders and the subsequent intermarriages and integration of the fur traders into Dakota kinship networks. He mentions the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark's expedition, which laid the groundwork for the 1805 arrival of Zebulon Pike. He explains that the fort had first been called Fort St. Anthony.[31] As we walk toward another building, he explains how Southern officers often brought enslaved people with them.

The tour includes the history of the site itself, noting how the fort had begun showing its age shortly after it was decommissioned. He shares how MNHS began working on the fort in the 1950s and 1960s, saving it from being paved over, and the efforts to add the fort to the National Register of Historic Places. Most of the buildings we see are reproductions, with the round tower, the hexagonal tower, the commandant's house, and the officers' quarters the four lone original buildings. When the tour's over, we're free to walk through the rest of the buildings. Leo and I start in the "Treaties and Sovereignty" interpretive space, moving through the archaeological exhibit, the medical exhibit, and the exhibit on health and healing. His patience starts running low, so we stop by the blacksmith shop. We miss some of the other exhibits, including the ones on soldiers' lives, the "married quarters," and the buffalo soldiers. But we've already been here for several hours, and he's done remarkably well for a nine-year-old on a hot August day.

There's one spot I still want to see, though, and that's the Dakota Memorial. We can't see any signs around the fort to show us the way, so we ask one of the guides at the gate. He furrows his brow, looking at the map I'm holding. There are two ways we can get there, but it's not clear which way is the best option. The guide apologizes, and Leo and I set off to find the memorial. We start down the path, coming to a T in the road. We decide to go right, only to turn around about five minutes later after checking where we were on Google Maps. We retrace our steps and walk left at the T instead. The paved path, shaded by tall trees on both sides, winds down a hill. We take another right at the bottom of the hill toward the Thomas C. Savage Visitor Center for Fort Snelling State Park. The Dakota memorial sits across the path from the visitor center, almost under the Mendota Bridge, and next to the parking lot for the park. Erected by Dakota community members in 1987, the monument is constructed out of large logs placed in a circle. The sign above reads "Wokiksuye K'a Woyuonihan"—"remembering and honoring" in Dakota.[32] There's a circular pipestone plaque in the middle.

There are no blacksmith demonstrations or artillery explanations. The rustling trees and birds are only matched by the cars humming along the bridge above us. There are no boisterous school groups or field trips here. It's just Leo

The Dakota Memorial, established in 1987 in Fort Snelling State Park. KATRINA M. PHILLIPS, AUGUST 2022

and me. His dark eyes meet mine, and he quietly asks me why we're here. He's not asking why we're at Fort Snelling. He's asking why we're at this monument, why we had to walk so far from the fort to get here, and why this place matters. Very little of what we learned at the fort transfers to the questions he's asking, and it underscores why these questions of historical interpretation continue to hang so heavily over Historic Fort Snelling.

THE POWER AND CONSTRAINTS OF HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION

Historic Fort Snelling's initial interpretation focused on the 1820s—well before treaty cessions, statehood, war, and forced removal.[33] While the current interpretation centers the multifaceted elements of life at the fort throughout the 19th century, the most pressing question still centers on how Historic Fort Snelling is to tell these multiple stories simultaneously. How do you pair the Scotts' fight for their freedom with the arrival of the buffalo soldiers? How can visitors comprehend early education at the fort, which mostly served the children of higher-ranking officers, against the Japanese-American translators of the Military Intelligence Service? Where does the history of the Dakota concentration camp fit into this narrative?

I'm asking questions when I've been asked to provide answers. I've written elsewhere about the contemporary struggles of marketing tourist enterprises that center troubling historical events, and Historic Fort Snelling prompts many of the same questions.[34] I've also been criticized for not roundly condemning historical performances and interpretations that twist or obscure historical narratives to make them more palatable for white tourists and more profitable for the organizations behind these endeavors. But the recent legislative debates over Historic Fort Snelling—and the Republican-led threat to cut the MNHS budget—demonstrate that these conversations are not relegated to the past, and MNHS is still constrained in the kind of interpretation it presents at the fort.[35]

On our way past the visitor center to the parking lot, Leo turns and heads toward the path to the overlook. I notice an installation dedicated to the 1805 treaty behind one of the buildings. The curved wood and metal piece, which requires the visitor to walk from one end to the other to read the text in full, draws from Article 3 of the 1805 treaty: "The United States promise on their part to permit the Sioux to pass, repass, hunt or make other uses of the said

1805 Treaty installation at Historic Fort Snelling. KATRINA M. PHILLIPS, AUGUST 2022

districts, as they have formerly done." Here, as with the Dakota Memorial, our ability to find this monument rests solely on a chance encounter. While this installation is on the visitor guide map, we probably would have walked past it if Leo hadn't wanted to see the river. The memorial and the monument are like the Native presence at the fort—it's there, but you just need to know where to look.

Historical sites and the stories they tell are powerful forces. But at a place like Historic Fort Snelling, the "colonial cacophony" often becomes overwhelming, even as the site's website includes the tagline "Many voices, many stories, one place." Visitors may walk away with a greater understanding of the Black and Native histories of the region, or they may walk away remembering how many soldiers could have their guns at the ready in the fort's round tower. They may remember the size of the rooms when the renovated visitor center was an Army barracks, or they might remember how the fort got its name. What remains to be seen, however, is what visitors might remember about the US–Dakota War and the role Fort Snelling played in the dispossession, confinement, and removal of Dakota people from Bdote. All history is not equal, though, and the fort's initial role in the subjugation of Native people—not to mention its subsequent role as a concentration camp in the wake of the US–Dakota War—is overpowered by the fort's later role in military history.

ENDNOTES

1. See Peter DeCarlo, *Fort Snelling at Bdote: A Brief History* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2016), 6–10, and Hampton Smith, *Confluence: A History of Fort Snelling* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2021), 7.
2. See Bill Salisbury, "'Fort Snelling at Bdote'? Senate Passes GOP Measure Cutting Historical Society Funds over 'Revisionist History,'" *Pioneer Press* [St. Paul, MN], published April 25, 2019, updated February 11, 2020; and Adam Uren, "Minnesota Historical Society Keeps its Funding after Fort Snelling Row," *Bring Me The News*, May 26, 2019.
3. Peter Diamond, "Fort Snelling Reopens after Revitalization Project," *Mpls.-St.Paul Magazine*, May 20, 2022; Shannon Prather, "Historic Fort Snelling Reopens Saturday after $34.5 Million Revitalization," *Star Tribune* [Minneapolis, MN], May 26, 2022.
4. See Sarah Shirey, "Snelling, Josiah (1782–1828)," *MNopedia*, last modified January 4, 2021, https://www.mnopedia.org/person/snelling-josiah-1782-1828; Marilyn Ziebarth, *Fort Snelling: Anchor Post of the Northwest* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1970), 1.
5. See Stephen P. Hall, *Fort Snelling: Colossus of the Wilderness* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1987), 1, 5; and Ziebarth, 1.
6. Stephen E. Osman, *Fort Snelling Then and Now: The World War II Years* (St. Paul: The Friends of Fort Snelling, 2011), 4.
7. The citation refers to the fort's designation as Minnesota's first national historic landmark. See Diamond, "Fort Snelling Reopens after Revitalization Project."
8. See Smith, *Confluence*; Peter DeCarlo, *Fort Snelling at Bdote*; and Katrina Phillips, "'Where Two Waters Come Together': The Confluence of Black and Indigenous History at Bdote," National Museum of American History, August 26, 2020, https://americanhistory.si.edu/blog/where-two-waters, among others.
9. See Nick Woltman, "Japanese-American Recruits Trained for Secret Mission at Fort Snelling during WWII," *Pioneer Press*, May 19, 2022; Smith, 221–222; DeCarlo, 76–77; and Osman, 14, among others.
10. Smith, *Confluence*, 2–3; Hall, 39.
11. Jodi Byrd, *Transit of Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 40.
12. Smith, 19–20. Scholars have long considered Wilkinson's plot, along with Pike's means of carrying out this reconnaissance, to be somewhat suspect, particularly in terms of Pike's dealings with Dakota leaders in the region. For more on Pike's instructions, see Marcus L. Hansen, *Old Fort Snelling, 1819–1858*; DeCarlo, 20–22; and Hall, 4, among others.
13. Roy C. Meyer, *History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 25.
14. DeCarlo, 22, 25; Ziebarth, 5.
15. Catlin's image is shown in Ziebarth, 14, and referenced in Hansen, 117. For more on how the men at the fort reckoned with their role on Native land, see Hall, 23–25; Marybeth Lorbiecki, *Painting the Dakota: Seth Eastman at*

Fort Snelling (Afton, MN: Afton Historical Society Press, 2000); DeCarlo; and Smith, among others.

16. See Hansen, 53; Evan Jones, *Citadel in the Wilderness: The Story of Fort Snelling and the Northwest Frontier* (first published by Coward-McCann Inn, 1966; reprinted Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 165; DeCarlo, 31–35; Smith, 53–57.
17. Ronald N. Satz, "Chippewa Treaty Rights: The Reserved Rights of Wisconsin's Chippewa Indians in Historical Perspective," *Transactions of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters,* vol. 79, No. 1 (1991), 13; Smith, 93.
18. See DeCarlo, 44–49; Smith, 120–123; and Waziyatawin Angela Wilson, ed., *In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors: The Dakota Commemorative Marches of the 21st Century* (St. Paul: Living Justice Press, 2006), 3.
19. See DeCarlo, 49.
20. See, for instance, Curt Brown, "'When Men are Hungry, They Help Themselves,'" *Star Tribune*, August 14, 2012.
21. "Message of Governor Ramsey to the Legislature of Minnesota, delivered at the extra session, September 9, 1862 (St. Paul: Wm. R. Marshall, State Printer, Press Printing Company, 1862, reprinted by Cornell University Library Digital Collections), 19.
22. See DeCarlo, 53.
23. See Waziyatawin Angela Wilson, "Decolonizing the 1862 Death Marches," in Wilson, ed., *In the Footsteps of Our Ancestors*, 47, 55.
24. See Corinne L. Monjeau-Marz, *The Dakota Indian Internment at Fort Snelling, 1862–1864* (Dayton, MN: Prairie Smoke Press, 2006), 16, 9–10, among others.
25. DeCarlo, 58, 60–61.
26. Edward D. Neill, the former secretary of the Minnesota Historical Society, was among the first to call for the fort's preservation. In 1895, the fort's commanding officer, Colonel Edwin Mason, tried to garner support to turn the fort into a pioneer artifact museum. A 1938 Works Progress Administration project helped turn the round tower in a museum. See Hall, 40.
27. Ziebarth, 35; Hall, 40; Phillips, "'Where Two Waters Come Together"; DeCarlo, 83.
28. Amy M. Tyson, "Men with Their Muskets and Me in My Bare Feet: Performing History and Policing Gender at Historic Fort Snelling Living History Museum" in Scott Magelssen and Rhona Justice-Malloy, eds., *Enacting History* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2011), 45.
29. "Fort Snelling and the US–Dakota War of 1862," Minnesota and the Civil War, *We Served Here: The Military and Fort Snelling*, author notes, August 31, 2022.
30. Alexander Ramsey, who had risen to the rank of governor, was in Washington, DC, when the Civil War broke out on April 12, 1861. He told President Lincoln that he would raise a regiment of 1,000 volunteer soldiers from Minnesota, which technically makes the First Minnesota Infantry Regiment the first troops offered to the war effort. See DeCarlo, 50; Hall, 31.
31. In 1680, a Jesuit priest named Louis Hennepin renamed Owamniyomni, the waterfall upriver from Bdote, the Falls of St. Anthony. See Smith, 8. The fort was named after Snelling in the mid-1820s after its completion. See DeCarlo, 29; Smith, 38.
32. DeCarlo, 87; Sheila Regan, "In Minnesota, Listening to Native Perspectives on Memorializing the Dakota War," *Hyperallergic*, June 16, 2017.
33. See Hall, 42.
34. Katrina M. Phillips, *Staging Indigeneity: Salvage Tourism and the Performance of Native American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).
35. Fort Snelling had over 60,000 visitors in the 2019 fiscal year, compared to approximately 200,000 at the Split Rock Lighthouse, Minnesota's most-visited state historic site. COVID-19 closures played a factor in the 2020 and 2021 fiscal years, and the recent re-opening of Historic Fort Snelling may lead to an increased number of visitors to the fort. This information is courtesy of Dr. Amber Annis, Minnesota Historical Society Director of Native American Initiatives, November 1, 2022.

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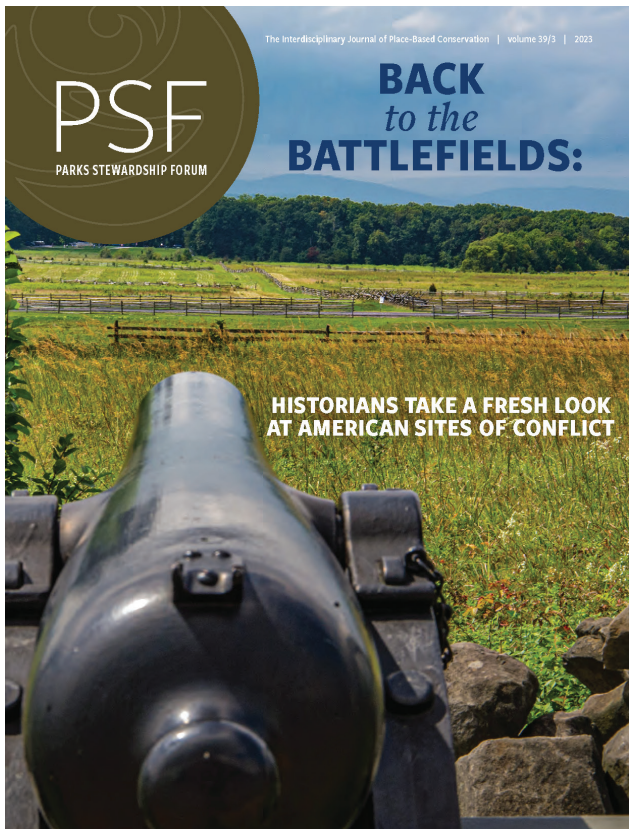

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